

SIMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND
EEFOBMEE 47

in February a letter from his mother, running
much as
follows:

" It is no longer possible to continue living
at Ais. Sell
the little furniture that is left. You will in any
case obtain
sufficient money to enable you to take third-
class tickets to
Paris for yourself and your grandfather.
Manage it as soon
as possible. I shall be waiting for you."

Young fimile acted in accordance with those
instructions,
but lie could not tear himself away from Aix and
his friends
without making with the latter a farewell
excursion to Le
Tholonet and the "*barrage* of the canal reservoir
planned by
Ms father. When he at last took the train
with old M.
Aubert, his heart was heavy at the thought
that he might
never see Provence again. But in that
respect his fears
were not realised.

On reaching Paris, he found his mother
residing at No. 63
Rue Monsieur-le-Prince, near the Luxembourg
palace. She
had obtained some assistance from friends, one
of whom,
Maitre Labot,¹ recommended El mile to D&sir^
Nisard, the
critic and historian, famous for having tried
to demon-
strate that there were two moralities; and
Nisard speedily
procured him a free scholarship at the Lycde
or college of
St. Louis. This was by Madame Zola's express
wish, for,
however great might be her misfortunes, she

desired that
her son might continue his studies.

But Paris now seemed a horrible place to the
youthful

[Smile. All was gloom there. Orsini, Pieri, and
Rudio had
attempted the life of Napoleon III outside the
opera-house

a few weeks previously, and a kind of terror
prevailed under
the iron rule of General Espinasse and the
new Law of

¹ See *ante*, p. 27.